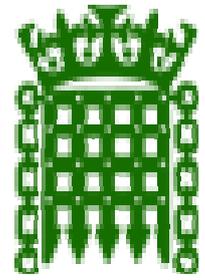


Light Rail (UK)

All Party Parliamentary Light Rail Group

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

"The past we inherit, the future we build"
Trams – Catalysts for Jobs, Renewal & Regeneration



DfT retains the purse strings for the largest local major schemes



2nd April 2015

The approval process for major schemes such as Midland Metro extensions look likely to continue to be managed by the DfT

The DfT is retaining control of the approval process for about 30 of the biggest local transport major projects in England, in a U-turn from previous thinking.

This meeting by invitation only, where MPs, Stakeholders etc., within the Light Rail industry and invited members of the Public will have a chance to discuss debate and raise questions concerning Light Rail & Trams.

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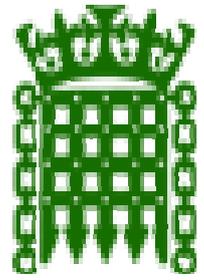


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Ministers had planned to fully devolve responsibility for local major transport schemes to Local Enterprise Partnerships under the Local Growth Fund regime that began this month. LEPs have had to develop assurance frameworks for ensuring that their projects deliver value for money.

Cambridgeshire officers told the area's shadow local transport body board last month: "We are aware that the DfT are now considering 'retaining' some of the largest transport schemes nationally for sign-off directly under DfT assurance."

The change of thinking is explained in a letter sent to local authorities by Tom Walker, director of the cities and local growth unit, at the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Walker said the DfT would continue to "hold and manage" two elements of the Local Growth Fund.

One is the 'tail' of major transport projects that were included in the pre-committed element of the fund – that was always known. The other is "funding for specific schemes, which are still subject to business case sign-off by DfT".

For these, the DfT will "pay the grant directly to the accountable body under arrangements to be advised by them [the DfT]".

Walker added: "In the case of specific schemes that are still subject to business case sign-off by the DfT, the DfT business case sign-off process may mean that the local assurance framework process is not required in full.

This will be agreed on a scheme-by-scheme basis."

A DfT spokesman told LTT the Department would be managing the approval process for about 30 of the 350 transport schemes being funded through the Local Growth Fund.

LTT understands that the DfT will manage all schemes valued at £20m or above if they are receiving at least £10m from the Local Growth Fund.

The new approach will ensure that, if a scheme does not pass the DfT's appraisal tests, the Local Growth Fund grant allocated to the project can be redistributed.

Courtesy Local Transport Today



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